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Agenda item 73 (q)
General and complete disarmament

Nuclear disarmament

Note by the Secretary-General*

1. At its fifty-fourth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 54/54 P of 1 December 1999, entitled "Nuclear disarmament", in paragraph 13 of which it requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the resolution to the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

2. In response to paragraph 13, the Secretary-General wishes to note that, despite some progress towards the reduction of nuclear weapons, in particular the ratification by the Russian Federation of the Treaty on Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START II), and the continued commitment of the Russian Federation and the United States of America to commence negotiations on START III as soon as possible, the time-factor is of crucial importance when addressing the risk that nuclear weapons still pose. The preservation and strengthening of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty as a cornerstone of strategic stability remains the basis for future reduction of strategic offensive weapons. The Secretary-General notes with satisfaction the successful outcome of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The results of the Conference on the balanced review of the implementation of the Treaty's provisions and the agreement on realistic and practical steps to further advance the process of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, in particular the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals and the renewed efforts to halt the proliferation of nuclear weapons, are remarkable achievements. The Secretary-General hopes that the States parties will now actively engage in the full implementation of the commitments undertaken in the Final Document of that Conference.[1]

3. The Secretary-General also notes the commitment of the States Members of the United Nations, expressed in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, to "strive for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear

* Finalization of the present note was dependent upon the outcome of the 2000 session of the Conference on Disarmament.

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weapons, and to keep all options open for achieving this aim, including the possibility of convening an international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers".[2]

4. With regard to the Conference on Disarmament, the single multilateral disarmament negotiating body, the Secretary-General, while aware of the various proposals put forward by delegations and groups of delegations during its 2000 session regarding the points raised in the resolution, remains concerned that the efforts of the Conference on Disarmament to make progress on nuclear disarmament and other issues have been frustrated by a lack of consensus. He reiterates his hope that the Member States of the Conference will be able to overcome the divergence of views and to reach mutually acceptable solutions at their next session, thereby allowing the Conference to commence substantive work on the most pressing issues in the field of nuclear disarmament.

Notes

[1] NPT/CONF.2000/28.

[2] Resolution 55/2.